

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

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SS-20 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 DRC-01

SAM-01 /160 W

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R 130857Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9580

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USCINCEUR

CINCLANT

DIA

COMUSFORAZ

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1884

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB PINT PO

SUBJ: INDEPENDENT LABOR MOVEMENT TAKING SHAPE

IN PORTUGAL

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REF: LISBON A-56 MAY 3, 1974

SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES OF EXISTING SYNDICATES MET ALMOST CONTINUOUSLY MAY 8 THROUGH 10 TO CREAT INDEPENDENT, UNIFIED NATIONAL LABOR OGRANIZATION. STATEMENTS FROM INTER-SYNDICATE MEETING HAVE HAD SURPRISINGLY MODERATE TONE. MANY LABOR LEADERS FROM WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE IN LISBON FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH PORTUGUESE COUNTERPARTS; IRVING BROWN AND MICHAEL BOGGS HAVE ISSUED STATEMENT ON BEHALF AFL-CIO. JUNTA HAS GIVEN BLANKET APPROVAL TO ALL CONTRACTS ARBITRATED BUT UNPROMULGATED BY FORMER REGIME. WORKER MILITANCY CONTINUES. END SUMMARY.

1. REPRESENTATIVES OF APPROXIMATELY 40 PORTUGUESE SYNDICATES, INCLUDING THE LARGEST ONES, MET MAY 8 THROUGH 10 TO COORDINATE LABOR SECTOR'S INFLUENCE AND INPUT IN CREATION OF NEW STRUCTURES TO REPLACE INSTITUTIONS OF CORPORATE STATE. STATEMENTS ISSUED DURING AND AFTER MEETING HAVE BEEN VERY RESTRAINED. COMMUNIQUE HAVE CALLED FOR DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT TO BE CREATED "IN UNITY WITH ALL DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT". ONE RESOLUTION CALLS FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING "WITHOUT ADMINISTRATIVE INTERFERENCE", AND LEGALIZATION EMPLOYEES' RIGHT TO STRIKE. SECTION ON STRIKES IS TEMPERED WITH STATEMENT THAT STRIKE SHOULD BE "MEANS OF LAST RESORT TO BE USED ONLY AFTER ALL OTHERS ARE EXHAUSTED", AND GOES ON TO WARN FORCEFULLY AGAINST OPPORTUNISTIC, INDISCRIMINATE OR UNDUE STRIKES. ANOTHER COMMUNIQUE STATES THAT REPRESENTATIVES HAVE RESOLVED TO USE EXISTING SYNDICATES UNTIL NEW INSTITUTIONS ARE CREATED. NEW INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE BROAD, STRONG UNIONS, FEDERATIONS AND CONFEDERATIONS OF LABOR ORGANIZATIONS. TWO STUDY COMMISSIONS WERE ESTABLISHED BY LABOR REPRESENTATIVES. FIRST WILL CONSIDER ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, SECOND WILL DRAW UP PEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS ON LABOR QUESTIONS UNDER GENERAL ORIENTATION OF CONVENTIONS 87 AND 98 OF ILO. COMMISSIONERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO LOOK TO EXPERIENCES OF OTHER COUNTRIES, "ESPECIALLY ITALY AND FRANCE" IN UNDERTAKING THEIR WORK. CONFIDENTIAL

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ONLY SPECIFIC DEMAND IN COMMUNIQUE IS FOR WORKER CONTROL OF WELFARE FUNDS. MEETING RESOLVED THAT WORKERS SHOULD REFRAIN FROM JOINING CABINET OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

2. JUNTA HAS ANNOUNCED APPROVAL OF ALL LABOR CONTRACTS WHICH HAD PASSED THROUGH ARBITRATION BUT LACKED LABOR MINISTRY APPROVAL. ONE SUCH AGREEMENT COVERS SEVERAL THOUSAND EMPLOYEES OF AMERICAN-OWNED

ELECTRONIC FIRMS (SEE LISBON 0731).

3. INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONAL UNIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE HAVE ATTENDED INTER-SYNDICATE MEETINGS AND HAVE HELD CONSULTATIONS

WITH SYNDICATE OFFICIALS OVER PAST FEW DAYS. FIRST TO ARRIVE WAS JOINT DELEGATION FROM NORWAY (REIULF STEEN, LABOR PARTY VP; KARRE SANDEGREN, RUNE GERBARDSSEN, AND JOHAN THORUD), SWEDEN (STEN ANDERSON, SEC GEN OF SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, AND RUNE MOLIN); FINLAND (KARI TAPIOLA), AND DENMARK (PEER CARLSEN). SCANDINAVIANS APPEARED TO IDENTIFY WITH SOCIALISTS. THEY RECEIVED GOOD PRESS COVERAGE. MARIO GIOVANINI OF ITALIAN CGIL HAS GIVEN INNOCUOUS TELEVISION INTERVIEW, BUT REPRESENTATIVES OF ICFTU AND OF FRENCH CGT AND CGDT, WHOSE NAMES UNAVAILABLE TO US, HAVE RECEIVED ALMOST NO PUBLICITY. VISIT OF WTUC SECRETARY GEN. PIERRE GENSOUS, ACCOMPANIED BY WTUC OFFICIALS ANGELI AND MAZZA, HAS RECEIVED GOOD PUBLICITY; WTUC GROUP GAVE INNOCUOUS PRESS CONFERENCE 9:00 PM SATURDAY, WHICH LARGELY IGNORED IN SUNDAY PAPERS. SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL MAY 9, AND AT SUGGESTION OF EMBASSY, AFL-CIO REPS IRVING BROWN AND MICHAEL BOGGS WENT TO INTER-SYNDICATE MEETING, WHERE THEY WERE WELCOMED AND MADE A SHORT STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY AND GOOD WISHES ON BEHALF OF AFL-CIO. BROWN AND BOGGS NOW PURSUING INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS WITH LABOR LEADERS AND PROMINENT SOCIALISTS, INCLUDING MARIO SOARES.

4. ON-THE-JOB ACTIVISM HAS CONTINUED OVER LAST FEW DAYS, AND MAY HAVE INTENSIFIED IN FOREIGN-OWNED FIRMS. CURRENT PATTERN IS THAT AD HOC WORKER COMMISSIONS IN PLANTS PRESENT DEMANDS TO MANAGEMENT FOR SPECIFIC CHANGES UNDER THREAT
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OF STRIKE. SUCH CONFRONTATIONS HAVE OCCURRED AT GENERAL MOTORS, FIRESTONE, AND TIMEX, AMONG AMERICAN-OWNED FIRMS; 2000 TIMEX WORKERS HAVE STRUCK BECAUSE MANAGEMENT REFUSES TO DISCUSS DEMANDS FOR FIRING OF CERTAIN SUPERVISORS. TAKEOVERS OF WORK PLACES APPEAR TO HAVE CEASED. THERE HAVE BEEN ORDERLY CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN LABOR AND MANAGEMENT AT GULBENKIAN FOUNDATION, NATIONAL STEEL WORKS, LISBON BUSS COMPANY, CUSTOMS SERVICE, AND LARGE AUTOMOBILE RETAIL CHAIN. MANAGERMENTS OF SEVERAL FIRMS HAVE RESPONDED TO WORKER PRESSURE BY GRANTING SOME DEMANDS, INCLUDING SOME HEFTY WAGE INCREASES.

5. COMMENT: FOCUS OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY APPEARS TO BE LABOR SECTOR AT MOMENT. MODERATE VIEWS SEEM TO BE PREVAILING AT INTERSYNDICATE MEETINGS OF LEADERS, BUT

MILITANCY OF WORKER COMMISSIONS, WHICH DO NOT APPEAR
TO BE CONTROLLED BY THEIR SYNDICATES, CONTINUES.
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